

INFORMATION FOR EXTENSION WORKERS ABOUT "CUT-OUTS
TO AID IN FARMHOUSE PLANNING"

Reserve

A composite of experiences shared with co-workers
in the preparation of the Pilot Kit

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To the many extension workers who are familiar with the use of cut-outs for house planning, the pilot kit "Cut-Outs To Aid in Farmhouse Planning" will be an old acquaintance in new garb. And that is what the Bureau of Plant Industry, Soils, and Agricultural Engineering, the Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics, and the Extension Service have intended. It has been prepared especially for Extension purposes and includes many ideas our field workers have picked up from State experience.

The kit was undertaken chiefly for the following three purposes:

1. To make this widely accepted tool for planning more available for the "mass" educational service which the need for better housing on farms requires, and the Bankhead-Flannagan Act has emphasized as an objective of extension work.
2. To improve the cut-out materials by providing (a) large scale, 1/2 inch equals 1 foot; (b) the Scale and Ruler card for unlimited cutting of rooms, as to numbers and sizes; (c) a wide range of scale-size furniture and building details; and (d) a series of illustrations of good practices in planning and guides to furniture arrangement and spacing.
3. To strengthen the teaching and checking values of cut-outs above their planning value. This purpose has been the dominant thought not only in the use of a "check list" and the "double check" of Step IV in the procedure, and in the plates A to H, but is the basis for Steps I, II, and III, which produce a scale plan that can be checked for its living space values as well as for cost.

An Extension Teaching Aid

The kit is a teaching aid for extension workers, not just a house planning device. It should stimulate use of bulletins and other helps on planning to remodel or build a house, and on the related problems of investment, modernizing, furnishing, decorating, landscaping, and farmstead planning. It may be compared to a radio set which enables farm families to "tune-in" on the technical planning features of your overall housing program. Since planning involves education, not merely dexterity, it is best to encourage deliberate planning. It is more profitable to study during the period of planning than during construction. Planning mixed with construction is conducive to headaches.

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The directions in the kit are detailed enough to plan difficult remodeling jobs. But it is recommended that they be abridged in Step III whenever desired, to suit the simplicity of each house planning problem. For example, omit any tedious details that will not affect the remodeling, such as placing cut-out furniture, doors, windows, and closets on the plan in areas of the house which are not to be altered. Even the outside walls may be unnecessary to show in those areas. It is very important however to show on the plan all the rooms of the house. It takes less than one minute to lay out, cut out, and place each room on the plan.

Of course, the plan details should be completed for the areas of the house affected by remodeling. These details will reveal the errors of judgment which would surely show up later during construction or after the house is in use. A little patience in the use of cut-outs can dispel illusionary planning. Don't spare the family thought and spoil the house. The more thought a family puts into the completion of its house plan, the more pleased it will be with its remodeling or building.

Something Old — Something New

Extension workers will recognize in the procedure suggested in the planning kit that Steps II and IV together are the prevalent custom of planning without the use of cut-outs. In other words, a freehand sketch of a proposed plan (Step II) is taken to a builder (Step IV), who usually modifies it along construction lines. Usually he gets a rough pencil drawing on wrapping paper approved by the farmer. In the subsequent construction, differences of opinion may develop too late for correction or if corrected, the cost of the error is nevertheless included.

The prime object of family house planning, however, is to reach sound decisions about space, convenience, and comfort. Cut-outs enable the family to express these decisions in a plan made to 1/2-inch scale which cannot be misunderstood.

Steps I and III are the "cut-out" steps. They have been developed from a series of trials by extension workers here and in several widely separated States, so we venture to suggest that the following pointers will be useful to others making use of "cut-outs."

How To Use the Kit

1. Use the Step I house plan for copying exclusively. In remodeling let the family duplicate the plan of their house as it is. In a new house problem let the family duplicate the house plan they have selected as nearest to their desire. This enables them to learn the "cut-out" technique without trying to plan a house simultaneously.

In Step I cut out the rooms, halls, stairs, closets, porches, and chimneys only. Mark location of doors if you wish, but only in pencil, and approximately. Get through with it in 5 to 15 minutes. The value of the Step I plan lies in furnishing (1) a plan of the house to copy in the sketches of Step II, and (2) an accurate plan for the family to test room cut-outs on before using

them in the Step III plan. The Step I plan is best if not "cluttered" with detail. Its construction builds confidence in the learner if he does it simply, quickly, and completely.

2. Use the freehand pencil line sketch plans of Step II to do the thinking work of planning and for the exchange of planning ideas. Step II is for visualizing ideas and holding them on paper. Let the pencil work be easily and quickly performed, but don't hurry the thinking.
3. Use Step III for checking the practicality of the plan. Start only with a mature idea expressed in a sketch plan. Superimpose the cutouts for this idea on the Step I cut-out plan. If it works make a complete Step III cut-out plan. If it doesn't work go back to Step II and develop your changes by using pencil sketch plans. Try these changes with cut-outs again on the Step I plan, and when they fit proceed with your Step III plan.

Step III may involve a number of important decisions; don't disarrange it to try out passing ideas. Don't move the rooms and stairs around like chess pieces to try out everyone's ideas. Use sketches for that. Let the plan grow, and prove its soundness in Step III.

If an extension worker is consulted by a family about their Step III cut-out plan, let the extension worker put his or her ideas down in a Step II sketch, and let the family incorporate what they want to use in their Step III plan. Let them make the Step III plan their own plan.

4. In Step IV business relations begin. Let the family be prepared to recheck in the Step III plan any changes proposed by the builder. The builder also can contribute his ideas in sketches, and these can also be tested by the family with cut-outs. It won't cost money to wait until the family is completely satisfied with the plan that is to be used in construction. The builder will gain by enhancing his reputation for having well-pleased clients.

Help First Those Who Will Build First

These cut-outs and the procedure described are prepared specifically to aid those families actually planning for remodeling or for building a new house to get the best housing value and satisfaction from their investment. Cut-outs are also useful for promotional, educational, and even entertainment purposes. There is no intent to disparage or discourage other good uses, except to suggest the value of reserving time to follow-up the cases that will actually end in construction. Only the plans constructed can be used to establish local result demonstrations of good housing and its costs. They will also provide the first experienced local leaders in farmhouse planning.

If only 1 percent of all farm families in a county were serious planners of house remodeling or building next year that would still mean about 20 cases to start and follow up in most counties. It would be well to begin with these. They probably will not all be planning at the same time of year. This is in fact a good time to start on a sound basis before building materials become more available and construction outruns education and planning experience. Even in counties

where no significant amount of housing improvement is expected, a normal annual improvement rate might involve about 2 percent of the farmhomes planning kitchen, bathroom, bedroom, closets, and minor room alterations in addition to modernization with insulation, heating, plumbing, and the like.

Improvement in housing has a cumulative effect. What is well done this year will also be a part of the good housing achievement of a county next year and for 10 or 20 years to come. Extension work for housing improvement, like soil conservation, rural electrification, forestry, and other cumulative programs, can be aimed at 100 percent completion of good housing. Good demonstrations, experienced local leaders, and cooperating builders and dealers will accelerate the rate of completion.

In-Service Training

County extension workers can follow the instructions for family use of the kit without training, since planning is actually done in the customary manner in Steps II and IV, and the cut-out procedure is presented in easy stages in Step I and Step III. Skill in using the kit, however, can be acquired by agents to best advantage through in-service training. This may be desirable in areas where house remodeling or building is expected to increase.

Such training should simulate the family use of the kit closely, but should be streamlined. In Step I save time by taking most of the room measurements of the house in advance. In Step II let the leader be prepared to save time by suggesting, if necessary, at least one sketch plan which will pass the test of Step III. In Step III much time may be consumed on details. Avoid this in advance by choosing a farmhousing problem involving remodeling only one or two rooms. In Step IV save time by coaching someone to act the part of the builder, or deal with it in discussion.

Training may be done either with or without a demonstration. The following procedure is patterned after a State district training conference in which scale drawings were used in planning. This procedure, however, makes use of cut-outs. The party undertook the planning job on an actual remodeling problem, without any preceding demonstration.

An Outline for In-Service Training

- A. Leader selects in advance a local house remodeling problem involving changes or additions of only one or two rooms.
 1. Takes measurements of all rooms, closets, halls, stairs, and locations of chimneys and stairs.
 2. Develops one dependable remodeling solution.
 3. Arranges a suitable room for the training class.

- B. A day or more later, the training party of possibly 40 agricultural, home demonstration, and club agents, assigned to mixed "family" groups of four or five persons each, visits the farmhouse which is to be remodeled.
1. Hears and records statement of family housing problem and rooms needed for solution.
 2. Learns or sets a suitable limit to expenditures.
 3. Obtains measurements of all rooms, closets, halls, stairways, porches, thickness of walls, exact location of chimneys and stairs, and approximate location of all doors and windows. To save time and avoid annoyance to the family take only a few measurements at this time, and use the remainder from A 1.
- C. Party goes to a high school or other well-lighted large room provided with a table for each family group.
1. The leader for the entire party gives directions for Step I room by room. All groups should complete this cut-out plan in 15 minutes. Hold a good example up to view to encourage neatness. On these plans, merely mark in locations of chimneys, doors, and windows with pencil. Omit doors and windows at this stage if you wish. Chimney locations should be marked as they are more apt to limit remodeling.
 2. The party leader starts all groups simultaneously on Step II. After 15 minutes call some of the more advanced ideas to the attention of the party by holding the sketches up to view. In the next 15 or 30 minutes most of the table groups will begin to crystallize their "family" selection of a simple remodeling plan. Some steering toward practicality may help at some tables to "sugar off" decisions rapidly in order to keep all tables on the time schedule.
- Rapid training is recommended to master the procedure and technique. Training in judgment, if inexperienced in this line, might require more time than the period can provide. Don't discourage or criticize deliberate judgment. Simply explain that the training period is too short for anyone to exercise his best judgment in planning, and give some pointers toward a solution which will permit starting Step III.
3. The party leader starts all groups simultaneously on Step III. This will take an hour of cooperative effort with a leader in each "family" group assigning tasks to the other members such as laying out, cutting out rooms, fitting furniture in rooms, and arranging the remodeling plan, with closets, stairs, halls, windows, doors, chimneys, and fireplaces. The leader at each table should follow the procedure in Step III, aided by the room leader occasionally.

After the Step III plans are arranged with the new rooms and their closets, windows, doors, and furniture in place, fasten two of the best plans on the wall for comparison. Use scotch tape and hang them with the front entrance of the plans downward.

The Leader conducts a discussion of the merits of these two solutions to the family housing problem (as recorded from B 1). Refer to the check list frequently to check opinions.

4. Leave one of these plans on the wall for use in Step IV. Fasten a Step I plan on the wall to the left of it. Call on a person coached to act as the "experienced builder," to pass on the question of the practicality of construction required by the plan, the appearance of the roof and other architectural features determined by the plan, and the estimated cost of changes from the plan of Step I to the plan of Step III.

Training of Farm People

County extension agents can improve their mastery of the procedures by training a few families in their homes in steps I and II and a beginning of Step III. Usually very few farm families in the same locality are simultaneously interested in actual remodeling construction, and probably no large number can hire builders at the same time in the same locality. Hence, it is well to start with the very few and assist them with follow-up visits and some preparation of their builder consultant so he will be cooperative. Families really helped may become local leaders and result demonstrators.

Training of a group of adults or older youth can be patterned after the in-service training procedure described, but the group should be small enough to meet in the house to be used as the remodeling example so they may proceed much as a family would in its own home. Two or more meetings might be required to complete Step III. But if the planning required by the various families is rather simple it would be best to let them start their own house planning in their separate homes as soon as they understand the use of Step III.

Cut-Out Demonstrations

Most extension workers will think of demonstrations first in connection with these cut-outs because you can put on a good "flannel board" show with them. But the adage "If the worker hasn't learned, the instructor hasn't taught" should be the guiding consideration. The kit is a tool for family use. It doubtless needs improvement, but let us not make it over into a different kind of tool for specialists' use. Demonstrations are not needed in training. Just plunge right into the routine and let the learners do the job, whether working with a large group divided into table groups, or in a farm home with a family.

However, there are occasions when a demonstration might be used to acquaint a large group with the purpose and use of the cut-outs. For example, demonstrations might be used at State or district meetings of extension workers, meetings of builders or building supply dealers, or vocational agricultural teachers. A condensed version might even be prepared for 4-H demonstration contests.

Although a wall demonstration can be as easily worked out with the use of scotch tape as a table demonstration, it would seem desirable to demonstrate "the family around the table" planning procedure rather than to put on a clever wall show. The table processes can be speeded up and partly skipped by having cut-outs and solutions partly finished in advance. The three plans of steps I, II, and III could be fastened side by side on the wall as fast as completed, and Step IV conducted by enacting or by explanation or discussion.

Tips for Demonstrations

Scotch tape is better than pins. It is in common use in many homes and available in local stores. Masking tape and draughtsman's tape is a scotch tape made of a crepe paper. It is more easily handled and removed than the transparent tape. It can be obtained in paint stores and college book stores.

Wrap it once around a calling card with sticky side outward and you have a two-faced tape easy to handle and to apply cut-out rooms to sheets of newspapers. It will work on the wall as easily as on a table.

Wrap masking tape spirally, sticky side out, around a strip of card, 1/4 inch wide. This card strip can be cut in pieces as small as you may wish to stick the cut-out furniture in place. When they are not in use keep all these card stickers between sheets of wax paper. Don't slide them on the wax or they will lose their grip. Common adhesive tape will do, in a pinch.

Newspapers used for plan sheets should be unfolded to full double-page size. You may leave the four or six news sheets together to give body and weight to hold pins, or to lie flat on the table or hang well on the wall. They should be held together by two wire staples or paper clips at the top edge when fastened to a wall. Wipe wall surfaces free of chalk dust, wax, or oil before fastening plan sheets to blackboards or wood moulding on walls. Scotch tape sticks best to clean surfaces. Hang plan sheets with the front of house downward. Pins, if used, should be inserted downward. Room initials and numbers should be made large and legible with black lumber crayon.

Become familiar with the table procedure before trying wall demonstrations.

Types for Investigation

General type is better than fine. It is in common use in many cases and usually is found in many. Looking over and comparing the type is a matter of time of course. It is not really needed and wanted for the investigation of the case. It can be obtained in many cases and is not really needed.

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